CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE EIGHT HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 30 August 2001, at 10.15 a.m.

President: Mr. Roberto Betancourt Ruales (Ecuador)

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The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I declare open the 885th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representative of China, Ambassador Hu Xiaodi, the Special Coordinator on the Review of the Agenda of the Conference, Ambassador Günther Seibert of Germany, who will present his report on the subject, and the representative of Bulgaria, Mr. Peter Kolarov, who will present a report on behalf of the Special Coordinator on the Expansion of the Membership of the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Petko Draganov.

I now give the floor to the representative of China, Ambassador Hu Xiaodi.

Mr. HU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, at the outset please allow me to express the deep appreciation of the Chinese delegation for your unremitting efforts in facilitating the early start of substantive work by the Conference on Disarmament. I would also like to extend our gratitude to your distinguished predecessors, Ambassador Camilo Reyes Rodriguez and Ambassador Carlos Amat Forés for the valuable endeavours they have made towards breaking the deadlock gripping this forum. In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to our Secretary-General Mr. Petrovsky, the Deputy Secretary-General Mr. Román-Morey and all other colleagues of the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament, for their hard work in providing services of the highest quality to the Conference.

The Chinese delegation has stated on many occasions, both here in the Conference on Disarmament and in other multilateral forums, that international arms control and disarmament efforts are now at a critical crossroads and the question of which path to take has become a major concern for the international community.

We have seen how such major issues facing the international community as, among others, the nuclear weapons reduction process, CTBT and the negotiation of a BWC protocol have come up against unwarranted challenges: it is very likely that weapons and weapon systems will be introduced into outer space; while last year the entire international community, including the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, recognized the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of global stability, this year we hear voices calling for the total abrogation of this treaty. All these developments are bound to have a profound negative impact on the international security of the twenty-first century and to jeopardize the interests of all States in the world. The arduous task which faces us, therefore, is to preserve international strategic stability and to ensure the integrity and effective implementation of the existing international treaties.

Faced with this severe situation we deem it necessary to present our guiding principles and basic positions related to the issues of international peace and security, which include, of course, arms control and disarmament.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century the world needs peace, its peoples want cooperation, nations yearn for development and societies seek progress: such is the trend of our

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times. The path of multipolarization and economic globalization followed by the world is, however, a tortuous one and, up to the present time, neither of the two major problems faced by today's world, namely, peace and development, has been resolved. The world in which we live is still far from tranquil.

The purposes of China's foreign policy are to safeguard world peace and to promote common development. We have consistently maintained that countries should abide by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the universally recognized basic standards governing international relations and that the cold war mentality manifested in power politics should be discarded once and for all. The affairs of a country should be decided by the Government and people of that country and world affairs should be handled by the Governments and peoples of all countries through consultations on the basis of equality and resolved through multilateral collective efforts. Unilateralism is bound in the end to fail, since it cannot be conducive to world peace and development nor helpful in resolving all the different issues which confront us. Each State has the right to take steps to safeguard its own security interests but none should seek to ensure its own security at the expense of the security of other countries. In the final analysis the only true security is the universal security of all countries.

China firmly adheres to an independent and peaceful foreign policy. Applying the five principles of peaceful coexistence it has conducted friendly exchanges and mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries, in which they treated one another as equals. In this new century the Chinese people and their Government stand ready to join hands with all countries and peoples who yearn for peace, development and progress, in striving for an international environment of lasting peace, in a common endeavour to propel the chariot of history forward towards the glorious goal of the development of humankind.

The following measures are of the utmost importance for arms control and disarmament: safeguarding global strategic stability, strengthening the treaty regimes which have already come into being in the area of arms control and disarmament, ensuring that no weapons or weapon systems are introduced into outer space, promoting the complete prohibition and total elimination of weapons of mass destruction and, in this process, preventing the proliferation of such weapons and their means of delivery. Indispensable for lasting global peace and security, these measures will ensure the security interests of all States without exception.

The ABM Treaty is a cornerstone of strategic stability and the basis for efforts to ensure the reduction of offensive strategic weapons. The international community should urge the parties concerned to make earnest efforts to ensure the effectiveness of that treaty and, with the aim of upholding and abiding by the ABM Treaty, to make further reductions in their offensive strategic weapons. On the issue of the non-proliferation of missiles, we maintain that the international community should further explore the possibility of establishing a more effective global regime to prevent the proliferation of missiles, on the basis of equality and non-discrimination and with the participation of all relevant States.

Our world is both rich and colourful. The diversity of civilizations is an essential feature of human society and also the driving force behind the progress of human civilization. Due

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respect should be accorded to the history, culture, social system and mode of development of each individual country. The diversity of the world is a reality that should be recognized. On the one hand the international community needs to set in place a new security concept of multilateral cooperation and collective security and to work together to create a dependable and peaceful international environment of long-term stability and security, with a view to promoting the process of multipolarization in the world. At the same time, countries should step up their economic and technical exchanges and cooperation and gradually transform the world's inequitable and irrational economic order into one that enables everyone to coexist and to benefit from economic globalization.

Regional security and stability will help ensure global peace and development. On 16 June this year, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan announced the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperative Organization. Taking security cooperation as its starting point, this organization serves, through a process of consultation and coordination, to promote full-spectrum cooperation in the fields of economics, trade and culture and in dealing with international and regional affairs. It is based on the concepts of non-alignment and non-confrontation with any other country or regional organization and openness to the outside world. In developing this new type of cooperation the organization takes as its guiding principles mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for the diversity of civilizations and the quest for common development. Based on these principles, a set of new concepts has emerged and started to take form: a new security concept which consists in mutual trust, disarmament and cooperative security; a new type of international relationship which centres on partnership and non-alignment; and a new model of regional cooperation in which all countries, large or small, jointly take the initiative in promoting mutually beneficial cooperation. We believe that this organization, in which the peoples of all its member States have vested their trust, will have a bright future.

Given the present difficult situation in the field of arms control and disarmament, it is essential that we remain steadfast and show solidarity in our endeavours. Only by so doing can we hope to withstand the current that flows against us and bring arms control and disarmament back to their proper course. To this end, the Chinese delegation will join hands with all other countries, with all other sides in this common endeavour.

In the work of the Conference on Disarmament, our most pressing priority is to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. An international legal instrument should be concluded on this matter as soon as possible. We advocate the launching at this point, of multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on this issue and the establishment of an ad hoc committee on PAROS, with a negotiating mandate. China supports the proposal put forward by the delegation of the Russian Federation in document CD/1644 and calls for the earliest possible recommencement of substantive work in the Conference, in accordance with the principle that the concerns of all sides should be addressed in a comprehensive and balanced manner. This work must deal with the issue of nuclear disarmament and the launching of negotiations in FMCT. The Chinese delegation also supports the work developed by the three special coordinators and will make its views known in the course of that work.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

I now give the floor to the representative of Germany, Ambassador Günther Seibert, who will speak in his capacity as Special Coordinator on the Review of the Agenda of the Conference.

Mr. SEIBERT (Germany): Mr. President, let me first congratulate you on the assumption of your high office and assure you of the full support of my delegation. I wish you success in smoothly concluding this year's session of the Conference and, we hope, in paving the way for a more productive session next year. May I also thank all your predecessors who have presided over the Conference this year for their untiring efforts to move the Conference forward to substantive work.

I am grateful for the trust which delegations have expressed in mandating me with the difficult task of Special Coordinator for the review of the agenda. Special coordinators on procedural issues can be no substitute for substantive work. With the full support of the delegations, however, they may assist the Conference in overcoming the present stalemate.

The decision of the Conference to appoint special coordinators was nevertheless taken at a late stage of this year's session. In view of the very limited time available to me as Special Coordinator I was neither able, nor could I expect, to succeed where earlier special coordinators had failed. I am therefore not in a position today to report to the Conference any tangible results of my consultations or to point out any emerging consensus on specific aspects of the issue. I do believe, however, that the decisions of the Conference to resume its consultations on reform issues, after not having addressed these issues for the last two and a half years, was an important step and that the discussions we have had on the question of the agenda were useful. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all delegations who replied to the letter that I circulated on 28 June or who actively contributed to the informal consultations on 23 August. I would have needed considerably more time to conduct in-depth consultations to be able to give to the Conference today a comprehensive and precise report on the wide range of positions expressed by delegations on the issue of the agenda. My report is rather a very personal interpretation of the situation, and I ask delegations for their indulgence if they feel that their positions are not appropriately reflected.

I approached the question of the agenda from two angles: function and content. As to the function of the agenda, my consultations confirmed my impression that the agenda of the Conference had undergone a considerable loss of practical relevance. The relationship between the agenda and the actual proceedings of the Conference had become quite tenuous. In earlier years, after the adoption of the Decalogue in 1979, the agenda had evolved in response to the changing preoccupations of delegations. In the course of the 1992 sessions, the issue of transparency in armaments was added as a new item to the agenda. Since then, the agenda had remained essentially static. At the beginning of the 1997 Conference session, after the conclusion of the CTBT negotiations, there were lengthy discussions on the agenda of the

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Conference. These discussions ended in a compromise, whereby the Conference maintained its previous agenda essentially unchanged, accompanied by a statement by the President that it was his understanding, that "if there is a consensus in the Conference to deal with any issues, they could be dealt with within this agenda". Since then, this has been the standard procedure of the Conference at the beginning of the yearly sessions. The presidential statement confers a considerable measure of flexibility to the agenda. This flexibility is further enhanced by an apparent general understanding that any disarmament issue can be subsumed under item 6 of the agenda, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament", if the Conference so decides. No doubt, there is a certain advantage in this considerable, even redundant, flexibility of the agenda. On the other hand, this flexibility would seem to diminish the basic function of the agenda, namely to guide and to structure the subsequent proceedings of the Conference. The agenda, although adopted by consensus, does not reflect a true consensus of the Conference to deal with the items contained in the agenda. The real decision on which items the Conference will deal with and how it will deal with them, is postponed to a further decision on the so-called programme of work. And that decision has eluded us for the last several years in spite of the admirable efforts of so many distinguished and able Presidents.

On this matter there seem to be two major schools of thought. One school welcomes the great flexibility of the present agenda and prefers to concentrate all efforts on the programme of work as top priority. The other school of thought, while also recognizing the priority of starting substantive work in the Conference, continues to attach importance to the agenda and supports efforts to improve its relevance for the Conference. I believe that the discussion we had on this aspect of the agenda was quite useful, but it did not produce clear results on which I could report to you today. In fact, the question of the function of the agenda must also be seen in the context of the working methods of the Conference as a whole. It should possibly, therefore, be more appropriately dealt with in the consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. The very useful consultations conducted by the distinguished Ambassador of Sri Lanka on this issue have in my view indeed identified a number of issues which are relevant in this context. In particular, the discussions we had on the role of special coordinators as defined in paragraph 5 (d) of Conference decision CD/1036 seem relevant to me in this context. We could re-establish an understanding that at least special coordinators could be appointed regularly on those agenda items where no consensus on subsidiary bodies exists. The relevance of the agenda would certainly be enhanced.

Proposals were also made to revitalize the plenary debate. After all, rule 19 of our rules of procedure states: "the work of the Conference shall be conducted in plenary meetings". In a situation where the Conference has not been able to establish subsidiary bodies for the last three years, it might indeed make sense to make better use of our plenary meetings through more substantive and focused plenary debates, structured along the lines of the agenda, in formal or in informal meetings.

As regards the content of the agenda, discussions were very much along the same lines as reported by earlier special coordinators. As far as the existing items of the agenda are concerned, I detect general agreement on the retention, at least in substance if not in wording,

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of item 1 (Nuclear disarmament), item 3 (Outer space), item 4 (Negative security assurances) and item 7 (Transparency in armaments). Furthermore, there seems to be at present no agreement on rewording any of these items, as proposed by some delegations. A considerable number of delegations have expressed doubts on the continuing relevance of item 2 (Prevention of nuclear war), item 5 (Weapons of mass destruction) and item 6 (Comprehensive programme of disarmament). There does not seem, however, to be one single item on the agenda to which at least one delegation does not continue to attach importance, both in substance and in the present wording. I must, therefore, conclude that at this stage changes in the existing items of the agenda would be quite difficult to achieve and we would require much more intensive consultations than were possible in the limited time available.

The same would seem to apply even more to proposals for changing the general structure of the agenda in the sense of a shorter and more generic agenda. The proposal has been made to reduce the agenda to three main items: weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons, and any other arms control and disarmament initiatives. One could argue that such a generic agenda would more clearly and truthfully reflect the flexibility of the present agenda. It is my impression, however, that most delegations prefer a more gradual and evolutionary approach to the agenda. One major reason for a more cautious approach of this nature is the fact that a great number of delegations feel that the present agenda appropriately reflects the top priority that they attach to the issue of nuclear disarmament in this Conference.

As regards proposals to add new items to the agenda, I feel quite encouraged by the fact that all delegations that participated in the discussions have expressed their willingness to consider the addition of new items to the agenda reflecting current international developments and preoccupations. I feel all the more encouraged as this seems to me, personally, to be the crucial point of our discussions on the agenda. I believe that it is essential for the future of this Conference that it be able to react appropriately to a changing international environment and to emerging new security concerns.

A large number of delegations have proposed the inclusion of a new item called "Conventional disarmament". This is a proposal that has already gained wide support in the past, as noted by previous special coordinators. It should also be noted that this would correspond perfectly to item IV of the Decalogue, entitled "Conventional weapons". It was pointed out that the issue of anti-personnel mines, in particular a possible transfer ban, might more appropriately be dealt with under such a new item. In this context, several delegations have proposed examining possible contributions of the Conference in the field of small arms and light weapons.

Several delegations have expressed strong interest in dealing with the question of missiles in view of the growing international attention given to the subject and the different initiatives recently taken in this field. Many delegations have proposed including FMCT explicitly, either as a new item or as a subitem, in the agenda. It was pointed out, however, that this might raise the question of the relationship between nuclear disarmament and FMCT.

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"Regional disarmament" was also proposed as a new item; it met, however, clear opposition from one delegation. Another proposal, of a more general nature, is to include automatically items recommended by the Untied Nations General Assembly in consensus resolutions. It should be noted that rule 27 of our rules of procedure already states that in adopting its agenda, "the Conference shall take into account the recommendations made to it by the General Assembly".

Although a number of questions or concerns were raised on these proposals to add new items to the agenda, they did not meet with outright refusal, with the exception of that on "regional disarmament". This leads me to the conclusion that further intensified consultations on such proposals to broaden the scope of our agenda would be quite promising.

Mr. President, I am not in a position to make substantive proposals to the Conference at this stage. In the limited time available, I was not able to identify clearly an emerging consensus on any of the specific aspects of the agenda. I believe, however, that the question of the agenda merits more intensified discussions in this Conference. I therefore recommend to the Conference that it continue consultations on the review of the agenda and appoint a special coordinator on this issue at the outset of the 2002 session.

In conclusion, I would like to repeat my thanks to delegations for their contributions to the discussions. I am very grateful for the active interest and encouragement by the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, for the work of the special coordinators. I wish to express my warm thanks to him and to Mr. Enrique Román-Morey, Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference and to Mr. Jerzy Zaleski, as well as to the secretariat staff and the interpreters, for the invaluable support I have received.

And may I finally publicly express in this plenary my deep appreciation for the exceptional contributions made by members of my delegation. My respect and gratitude go in particular to Mr. Klaus Achenbach, who has so efficiently supported me in my task as special coordinator and who demonstrated the highest professional and personal qualities throughout his five years in Geneva.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the Special Coordinator for the presentation of his report and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

I give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, Mr. Peter Kolarov, who will present a report on behalf of the Special Coordinator on the Expansion of the Membership of the Conference, Ambassador Petko Draganov.

Mr. KOLAROV (Bulgaria): At the outset, I would like to join the previous speaker in extending my warmest congratulations and appreciation on your assumption on the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and to wish you every success. Let me assure you that you may count on my delegation's full cooperation and support. I would also like to extend our gratitude to your distinguished predecessors for their tireless efforts aimed at overcoming the current deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Kolarov, Bulgaria)

As already announced, I will present the report which follows on behalf of Ambassador Petko Draganov, who, for reasons beyond his control, is not in a position to do this personally:

Mr. President, it is my pleasure to address today the Conference on Disarmament in my capacity as Special Coordinator on the Expansion of the Membership of the Conference, thus discharging the mandate contained in decision CD/1646, dated 14 June 2001. I think it is worth recalling that, under paragraph 2 of its rules of procedure, the Conference is under the obligation to review its membership at regular intervals. In fact, over the past decade the Conference on Disarmament has focused on the expansion of its membership on a more or less regular basis, thus trying to find a mutually acceptable solution to the legal as well as moral "dilemma, created by the existing tension between the limited membership of the Conference on the one hand and the universal scope of its task on the other", to quote Ambassador Hofer of Switzerland, who served as Special Coordinator in 1998 and with whom I had the pleasure to begin my consultations.

Indeed, Mr. President, I had a chance to step on the solid ground prepared by my predecessors and, instead of trying anew to develop theoretically the problem of enlargement of the Conference, I could rather concentrate on the respective national positions, trying to compare them so as to report to you on a possible consensus, or at least, on the prevailing mood in the Conference on the issue. Accordingly - and you have certainly noticed that - the options listed in the questionnaire, circulated in mid-July to all the Conference's member States, namely, maintaining the status quo, limited expansion, expansion by all 22 countries which have applied for membership and qualified universality (i.e., the right to application by all member States of the United Nations and the specialized agencies), were not the product of my imagination. They had already been discussed in the past when a limited expansion of the Conference's membership was agreed upon. Nevertheless, I considered that such a pragmatic approach would be helpful for clarifying the respective national positions on a new expansion of this important body and would prepare the factual basis required for further negotiations.

In discharging my term of service during the past month, I had bilateral consultations with or received replies from almost half of the Conference's member States. I consider these consultations as being very helpful as they have provided me with a first-hand sense of our aspirations as well as an idea of which the most sensitive issues are. The preliminary results of this first round have shown an overwhelming support for a considerable expansion of the membership of the Conference. In fact, more than two thirds of the delegations that expressed their position are favourable to the qualified universality option or the enlargement of the Conference by the 22 applicant States, the latter often being considered as an interim step towards universal membership.

In general, most of the delegations that expressed their support for such an enlargement argue that, in the current impasse affecting the Conference on Disarmament, maintaining the system of limited membership would be a mistake and would perpetuate a crisis of the Conference's very legitimacy. A considerable enlargement without preconditions or the

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qualified universality options would democratize the Conference and would pave the way for future disarmament negotiations inside the Conference rather than in ad hoc forums outside the Conference framework. Along the same lines and for obvious reasons, most of the above-mentioned delegations reject practically any selection criteria or preconditions for membership. Of course, there are also opponents to these two options. Several delegations have expressed doubt with regard to the utility of increasing considerably the membership. Common to those member States is the argument that the last 1999 expansion did not help overcome the current deadlock.

Most of the remaining delegations seem to be favourable to a limited expansion by anything from 5 to 15 or more new members, carried out in accordance with established objective criteria, such as date of application and balanced regional representation. Other proposed criteria include interest and capacity to participate in the work of the Conference, contribution to the cause of disarmament, and implementation of the international instruments in the disarmament field. As in the past, this option seems to be feasible, but a very complicated one as - and this was pointed out by most of its opponents - it implies the selection of a number of agreed criteria for membership. In fact, past experience has shown that this option requires not the application of a set of "objective" criteria for expansion, but a temporary solution - albeit one that is acceptable to all the Conference's member States - of a further exclusion of some of the applicant countries.

It is also clear that a discussion on membership criteria may lead to an indefinite delay as it is almost impossible to accommodate all the divergent views on how to identify the ideal number of participants, taking into account the concept of regional balance (which, by the way, is considered by many as a typical example of cold war thinking), the date of application, and such considerations as the activeness, interest, contribution, etc., of applicants, as well as endeavouring at the same time to satisfy competing political, regional geo-strategic and other claims.

Finally, the issue of enlargement remains sensitive for a few countries that are still not fully persuaded of the utility of a new expansion of the Conference, and which point out that the previous enlargement did not increase its effectiveness. As stressed by many delegations, however, there is no proof of any direct correlation between the number of members negotiating and the ability to perform. On the contrary, other forums have proved to be able to negotiate quite efficiently, notwithstanding the number of their members. Against this background, I have noticed a broad support for the thesis that a lack of sufficient political will, and not increased membership, is the main reason for the current impasse in the Conference on Disarmament.

Taking into account the time restraints, and bearing in mind the sensitiveness of the issue, I would sum up my observations as follows:

First, as already stated, under the rules of procedure, the membership of the Conference on Disarmament is to be reviewed at regular intervals. During my consultations no one

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challenged this approach. I observed readiness and active support in my search for a mutually acceptable solution and I am very grateful for the cooperation and the understanding I received from all the Conference's member States in discharging my duties.

Second, there is a broad majority feeling in favour of a new considerable expansion of the Conference on Disarmament. In fact, I noticed a strong determination among many delegations to reach a durable, and even a definitive solution, to the problem of the Conference's membership by adopting the appropriate option.

Third, even if most delegations showed flexibility and readiness to consult on the issue, at this stage there is still no consensus on any of the four options, and I am still not in a position to propose a mutually agreed position tolerable to all member States. The expansion of the Conference on Disarmament is a dynamic process, which, however, is also a reflection of the international security environment. This exercise will require further hard work and considerable negotiating skills in search of a delicate balance between the respective national interests and our common responsibilities as the sole negotiating body with a universal task in the field of international security and disarmament.

Fourth, as already stated, owing to the limited time available as well as for other reasons beyond my control, I have to confess that I was not in a position to accomplish fully my responsibilities in the way I consider appropriate. Consequently, this should be regarded only as an interim report, and I would strongly recommend the continuation of this important exercise through the reappointment at the beginning of the 2002 session of the Conference of a special coordinator on the expansion of the membership of the CD. It goes without saying, Mr. President, that I am ready to provide my successor with the output of my experience.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to express my gratitude to all the delegations for their valuable support. My gratitude goes also to Mr. Vladimir Petrovski, the Secretary-General of the Conference, and to his deputy, Mr. Enrique Román-Morey, as well as to Mr. Jerzy Zaleski, who provided me with excellent assistance in my work as special coordinator.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): I thank the representative of Bulgaria for presenting the report of the Special Coordinator on the Expansion of the Membership of the Conference and for the kind words addressed to the Chair.

I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. MAIOLINI (Italy): I would like to say a few words and not in a very formal way. Once Chateaubriand said, "Un orientaliste, c'est un homme qui a voyagé beaucoup." In this assembly, a man of disarmament is a man who thinks and proposes a lot. That is why I have to say that I am pleased that this morning we have heard three thoughtful statements. And I am also pleased that all three have had the effect of advocating continuation of the exercise which we initiated a few weeks ago. All three statements have interesting points and I think they deserve a great deal of attention.

(Mr. Maiolini, Italy)

The statements of the two Special Coordinators show us that the matters that have been dealt with, of course, have been dealt with by others in the past, but this does not mean that those in the past exhausted the issues that were being considered. So, I would like to express to the two Special Coordinators my warmest compliments and congratulations and, as far as my delegation is concerned, we shall do our utmost to deepen the consideration and the examination of what they have proposed and explained to us today.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Spanish): Does any other delegation wish to take the floor at this stage?

That appears not to be the case. Accordingly, this concludes our business for today.

As Thursday, 6 September 2001, is an official holiday and the Palais des Nations is closed, the next plenary meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 4 September 2001, at 10 a.m., and it will be followed by an informal plenary meeting during which we will start consideration of the draft annual report of the Conference on Disarmament.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.